been reopened. The Consulate General in Karachi was closed during 1994-95 as a result of unilateral decision by the Pakistani Government. Our Embassy in Kabul became temporarily inoperative due to the security situation during 1994-95.

Backlog of Passport Applications

3927. SHRI T. GOVINDAN : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are taking any action to clear the backlog of applications for Passport as thousands of applicants are waiting for a long time to get the passport; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Government monitor the performance of Passport Offices on weekly basis with a view to clearing backlog of passport applications. Some of the steps taken in this direction are; (i) close and regular coordination with concerned police authorities in those cases where the backlog has accumulated due to incomplete reports; (ii) sending periodic reminders to applicants to meet the deficiencies in their application forms and to submit additional documents wherever required with a view to clearing backlog on this account; (iii) augmentation of staff strength to reduce and clear pendencies; (iv) upgradation of office facilities including computerisation leading to faster screening and processing of applications; (v) opening of new offices and Collection Centres; (vi) review of systems and procedures in order to avoid delays which result in the creation of backlog; (vii) increasing the size and validity period of the passport; (viii) expansion of list of offiers authorisied to sign Verification Certificates; (ix) regular inspection of Passport Offices by officers of the CPV Division with the specific aim of ensuring clearance of backlog and necessary follow-up action; and (x) setting up of Passport Advisory Committees.

Sainik Samachar

3928. SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether several ex-officers and Jawans of armed forces are subscribers of Sainik Samachar on regular mailing list;

(b) if so, the number of half yearly, yearly, two yearly and three yearly subscribers of Sainik Samachar separately;

(c) whether several subscribers have gone to the consumer courts for not getting the magazine in time;

(d) if so, how many cases are pending in the consumer courts against Sainik Samachar; and

(e) the expenses incurred by Government so far on these cases since the past three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI N.V.N. SOMU) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b)

Half Yearly	-	Nil
Yearly	-	9,000
Two Yearly	-	5,000
Three Yearly	-	6,000

(c) Four subscribers have gone to the consumer courts for not getting the magazine in time.

(d) One case is pending.

(e) Rs. 9,000/- approximately.

Reservation of seats for wards of Delhi University Employees

3929. KUMARI FRIDA TOPNO : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Delhi University has decided to set apart a quota of seats in different courses for the wards of the University employees (both teaching and non-teaching);

(b) if so, details of the same and whether the candidates so provided seats will have to satisfy the minimum qualifications for admission;

(c) whether provision similar to above exist in other Central Universities; and

(d) if so, the details of the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MUHI RAM SAIKIA) : (a) to (d). The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Anti-Tank Missile Tests

3930. DR. C. SILVERA : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Anti-Tank missile tests have been conducted in near recent past;

(b) if so, details thereof with objectives;

(c) whether the development of the 'Nag' missile will boost the defence and fire power of our armed forces; and